

Orkney Marine Planning Update

Autumn 2024

Introduction

It has been a very busy summer for OIC Marine Planning. Having received approval from Scottish Ministers to begin the consultation on the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, the Marine Planning Team have organised and been delivering the formal public consultation. This is the consultation for both the [Regional Marine Plan](#) as well as the [Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance](#).



The team ready to welcome 50 people at Heilsa Fjold - Sanday

This 12-week period, which began on 1st of August, has included in-person events, school visits, targeted business interviews, youth club visits and much more.

Alongside the Regional Marine Plan consultation there have been many marine developments coming through the licensing system as well involvement in other upcoming marine projects. It could therefore not be a better time to welcome our new team member, Emily, to the Marine Planning Team. We are delighted to have Emily onboard.

This Autumn 2024 newsletter covers these key developments and more, but as ever if you have any questions or stories you'd like included in future issues, drop us an email on marine.planning@orkney.gov.uk.



The Marine Planning Team visiting Cata Sands and Tresness whilst waiting for the return ferry, after a successful consultation event

Regional Marine Plan Consultation

Since the 12 week consultation launched at the beginning of August, the Marine Planning Team have held 10 in-person drop in events, 6 of which on the ferry-linked isles as well as Kirkwall, Stromness, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope. Interest from the community has been very high, with many in-depth discussions held about the Regional Marine Plan and more general marine topics. We believe this was a huge success and we are delighted with how much has been achieved in such a short time. Thank you to everyone that came out to see us, we had a wonderful time catching up with you all!

The consultation closes on October 25th. It is not too late to submit your comments, and we would encourage you to do so. Links to the consultation documents are available on the previous page.



People of all ages have shown an interest in the Regional Marine Plan

Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan: Consultation Draft – What next?

The consultation will close on October 25th 2024, after the 12 week consultation period. The OIC’s Marine Planning Team will then give careful consideration to all the comments, amend the Plan accordingly, and put together a document detailing how the comments received have been addressed and what has been changed in the plan. The Regional Marine Plan will then be submitted to the Scottish Government’s Marine Directorate for approval, and any final changes, before being considered for endorsement by OIC Elected Members at Committee. At that point, the Plan will need to be considered by Scottish Ministers for their adoption. This process will begin as soon as the consultation closes. We are keen to progress the adoption of the plan so that we can start implementation as soon as possible.



Summary of completed and upcoming engagement activities on the draft marine plan

Activity Type	Comments
Early engagement	Completed in 2021. A series of workshops to provide information on the Regional Marine Plan that was in development.
Community engagement sessions	Drop-in sessions running from 11am-7pm. Locations include: Stronsay, Rousay, The Hope, Shapinsay, Hoy, Stromness, Kirkwall, Sanday, Westray, Finstown (stall)
Online Sessions	2 x online information sessions
Sharing & recording spatial data	Build on feedback from Marine Recreation Survey and other marine spatial data held to further 'ground truth' draft data and add any gaps identified.
Stromness Museum Information Panel	As part of their 'Nature in a changing Climate' exhibition.
Stall at Snorkel Trail event	Attended and hosted a stall at the launch of the Snorkel Trail, hosted by the Stromness Museum and SWT.
Social media campaign	Regular updates through OIC and Scottish Government channels, inc. links to participate and access documents.
Radio	Multiple rounds of interviews with BBC Radio Orkney before and during the consultation
Youth Parliament / Young Islanders Group/ Youth Café/Pride Tribe	Sessions with youth groups
SmartSTEM Workshops	Workshops to multiple student groups at SmartSTEM, an event aimed at raising awareness for careers in STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Maths). This involved playing the Marine Spatial Planning Board Game to explore marine planning scenarios.
School visits	Previous engagement with schools demonstrated the desire for follow up visits. Marine Planners will run sessions with several schools.
Westray Development Trust Conference 2023	Presentation and stall at the Westray Development Trust Conference
Business Regulatory Impact Assessment – Business Interviews	Supports technical document required as part of the consultation process.
Information leaflet on the marine plan	A bespoke factsheet will provide an overview of the key elements of the plan and was distributed to key areas.
Orcadian advert	Marine Plan and Strategic Environment Assessment advertised in the Orcadian. Information leaflet on upcoming events inserted into following week's papers.
Posters	Posters put up in key areas around Mainland Orkney and the isles to raise awareness and display information and links to the relevant documents.

Marine Applications

A significant part of a Marine Planner's job is responding to marine licence applications, as a statutory consultee, for developments and activities within Orkney's 12 nautical mile marine region. The powers to do this were received in 2020, at the same time as getting the powers to prepare the Regional Marine Plan.

The number of marine licence and planning applications this year has been particularly high, with several nationally important developments now within the system. This includes applications for the Scapa Deep Water Quay, Hatston Pier Extension (Orkney Logistics Hub), West of Orkney Wind Farm and the Ayre Wind Farm, and EIA Scoping Opinion for Flotta Ultra Deep Water Quay, amongst many others. The Marine Team are closely reviewing these applications alongside our land use planning colleagues.

New Team Member

We have the pleasure to introduce Emily, our new Graduate Marine Planner to the team. Emily joined us in September, moving up from Edinburgh where she worked as an offshore wind EIA consultant which entailed working on drafting and reviewing Scottish and Irish offshore windfarm developments environmental impact assessments after graduating from her Masters in Marine Systems and Policies in 2022.

Prior to this, Emily had worked on Tall Ships travelling between Ireland and the Scottish Isles teaching teenagers and young adults about maritime and marine opportunities and careers. During this time, she was in awe of the Scottish Isles and their beauty. She is delighted to start her life in Orkney and has been fortunate to come in at the time of the islands visits for the Regional Marine Plan consultation. She looks forward to the upcoming publication of the RMP and the benefits that it will deliver for Orkney. We are delighted to have Emily in the team.



*Meet Emily our new Graduate
Marine Planner*

In other news

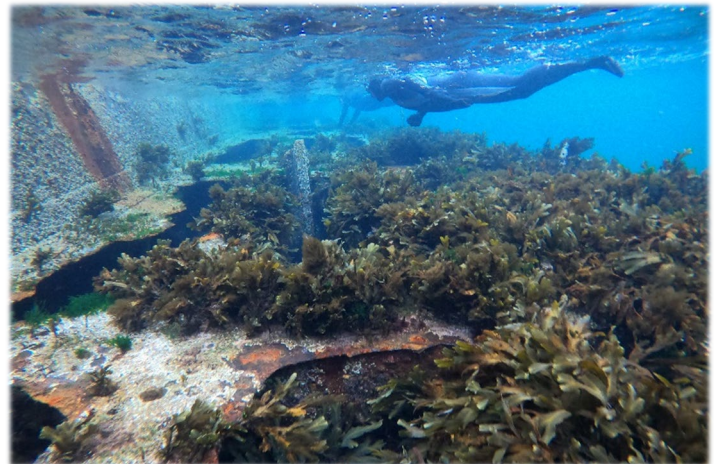
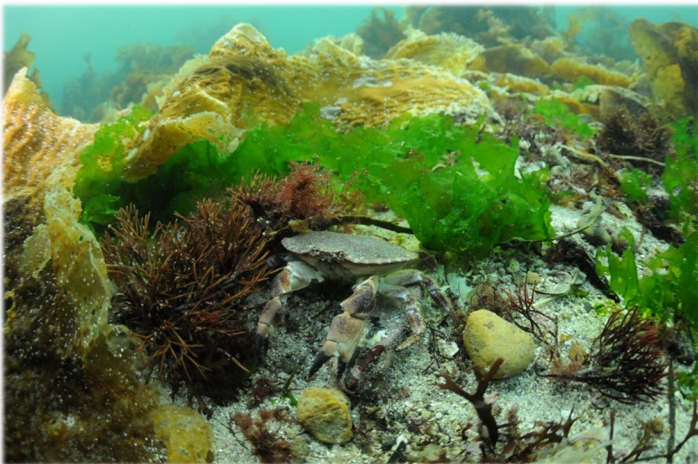
The Stromness Museum and Scottish Wildlife Trust have been working closely with communities and businesses across Orkney to develop the Orkney Snorkel Trail - a self-led guide to exploring some of the best snorkel spots around Orkney.

The snorkel trail sees six sites around Orkney recommended around the Mainland and the isles:

- Stronsay, Ayre of Myres
- Shapinsay, Elwick Bay
- Finstown, Bay of Firth
- Inganess Bay
- Churchill Barriers
- Hoy, The Ayre



The brochure of locations and species to look out for can be downloaded from <https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/things-to-do/snorkel-trails/>



The snorkel trail highlights some of the most accessible and safe locations for observing marine life around Orkney

Thanks for reading!



PSA

Our publication 'the Orkney Islands Marine Region: State of the Environment Assessment' (2020) is now available at the Stromness and Kirkwall libraries to borrow.

New newsletter sign-up form

We have recently launched a webpage to allow new stakeholders and interested parties to subscribe to this newsletter themselves. This can be done at <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/D/subscribe.htm>. As always, please feel free to pass this newsletter on to anybody who might be interested.

Contact us

If you have any queries, please contact us on the email address below.

Email Address: Marine.planning@orkney.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/D/marine-planning.htm>

Important Links

Orkney Regional Marine Plan - Consultation Draft:

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/media/hvipwofn/orkney-islands-regional-marine-plan-consultation-draft-final-2.pdf>

Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance – Consultation Draft:

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/media/fyib4rag/finfish-farming-spatial-guidance-consultation-draft.pdf>

Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance - Consultation Draft interactive maps: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3ec2b843d89346e3ac0e2f476b4568bd>

Orkney Islands Council Marine Planning Team

